THE VOICE OF THE ORIENT

The shapes which, as the languid waltz floats through the chick, come out and glide between me and the white bed, they who have touched my life to the quick in the old times, they who have left marks upon it for good or evil, have all passed away, and only I remain in flesh and blood to tell the tale.

She who was once the Punjab's queen, the Indian Helen, the serpent of the Five Rivers, with the loveliest voice, the greatest magnetism in the land, who never tried to conquer because to be seen was enough.

Or he, the most exquisite dancer of the Bengal Cavalry, who once travelled from Cabul to Lahore for one dance, with the prematurely whitened hair, whose greatest charm concealed the profoundest cynicism.

And she of the cat-like eyes, glittering in the dark, whose uncanny fascination and brilliant cleverness were enlisted for the forces of evil.

One by one these ghostly men and women pass before the arm chair where I sit awaiting the hour when sleep will come and

bear me
away to that other life, the Real,
and as one
after another their haunting eyes
meet mine
they call in chorus :

"We